

From: Bowers
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/24/02 2:56pm
Subject: Re: Microsoft Settlement -- Benifits vs.damage

I as a small business owner feel that I am directly responsible for the Microsoft Antitrust problem. I was an early adopter of the total Microsoft systems. This was done because trying to use and/or coordinate the various software programs was costing me tens of thousands of dollars a year.

BENEFITS

1) Most importantly, networking with the greatest number of customers, clients, associates, suppliers, government etc. etc., was the driving force and my greatest benefit. Once I made my software decision, as a consumer, I and those around me (not Microsoft) drove or caused the total use of Microsoft software.

2) I demanded compatibility in software. I was wasting at least \$10k yearly getting all the various software/hardware to just work. A Microsoft choice with it's system wide compatibility was what solved my basic problems and increased my productivity by at least 200%. Yes, there were nice but seldom used features else where, but they provided no foundation, financial stability or guarantee of continued existence.

3) I required anyone doing work with me to be Intel PC compatible using Windows. This was one of the best business decisions I made. I and others did not have time for the loss of trying to get various systems and software to work. We all wanted to communicate quickly and accurately. It took about two years to standardize on Microsoft and AutoCAD.

DAMAGES

If I'm to believe the settlement reports, there might be a \$10 to \$20 per machine "damage" to me the consumer. I say, balance this "damage" against the tremendous gains the use of Microsoft products gave me: At least a 200% gain in productivity/profitability;

Elimination of yearly computer software maintenance costs;

Enormous gains in quality and speed of service to my clients via networking;

And finally opening up of the internet to standardization and a vast array internet data, research, and business.

In summary, I and the rest of the world will be better off for having this anti-trust suit settled. It has the beneficial effect of declaring Windows the winner, allowing new features to be added, and placing the operating system with a company that has demonstrated the ability to keep the system coordinated. Microsoft is a monopoly because most of us have chosen to use it, and have required those who do business with us to be compatible. It allows the specialty and /or hobby systems to continue in their efforts and allows business to continue the serious business of networking all aspects of commerce.

